1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

we found that for the krutu to act as a jury was an important part of its work. The krutu not only saw to the making of law, but it was also the medium for levying penalties upon those who transgressed law. The same krutu that legislated could judge infractions of its legislation. In its hands was the power to enforce the decisions it had made against the offender.

We had wondered whether, in this Suriname bush, the African court which so characterized the civilization of the ancestors of these people had survived. When we heard of the supernatural vengeance which followed upon infractions of custom, we sought to find out if people took the matter of punishment into their own hands, if kunu was reinforced by human assistance.

"Ai, mati," a chief once said to us, "kunu is strong, but the krutu is strong, too."

If a man had sworn an oath against another, had called down upon another a curse of some evil spirit, or asked that the gods make a man impotent, or that they stop the womb of his wife from conceiving, or if a man murdered by means other than witchcraft, then he was judged by a krutu. A man who had destroyed a canoe belonging to another—a serious offense, for, as the Bush Negro says, "Had our forefathers not had the wisdom to build canoes, we would still be slaves to the Bak'a"—he, too, would come before this court. The adulterer would be brought here for the assessment of his fine.

When the krutu sat as a court, the accused was not without the right of defense. If it were thieving, or adultery, or the telling of falsehoods, or trespass, or the destruction of the property of another, where the kunu involved was not of the greatest, then the case was judged on the basis of the evidence. In the court, the interests of the one who was accused were cared for by one of the elders of his *mbe*, his relative and a fellow member of his own great family. But when the crime was one of the greater ones, then methods other than the sole use of testimony were employed. Evidence was necessary, but evidence was not

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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648 other canoe is entirely open, the Negroes being more hardy than we.

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685 Stealing a corial is to the Bush Negro what stealing a horse was to the early plainsmen of the American frontier: a capital crime. So much of the Bush Negro life is on the water that no man can get along without a canoe for any length of time. There are only hunting trails through the jungle, and traffic by preference goes along the river. In spite of the luxuriant jungle, a man left in the bush without food is liable to starve, as a frontiersman left on the plains without a mount was considered to be as good as dead.

Next to Dutch Guiana is French Guiana, a penal colony. Here large numbers of convicts are imprisoned. There are also men known as *libérés*—exiles who are at liberty within the colony, but forbidden to leave it. Many succeed in escaping desperately into the bush. They must obtain canoes, for travelling any distance overland is practically impossible, due to the heavy growth. If the fugitive cannot purchase one at the Negro villages, the only alternative is to steal it. Such thieves are pursued relentlessly by the Djukas, and killed on sight. Bloody tales are told in Paramaribo of hand-to-hand struggles to horrid deaths, between black man and convict fighting for life, in the dim blue light of the jungle day, in the unknown interior of Surinam.

2:Kahu D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

gaining possession of other fugitives. It is said that, until recently, actual war prevailed among the tribes because some Saramaccaners invaded the Boni and Aucaner districts, poaching on their lumbering, hunting, fishing, and balata rights. The punishment today for any Bush Negro found poaching in another district is a healthy beating with canoe paddles and fists, after which he is warned not to repeat the offence.

With the Indians of Surinam the Bush Negroes have little commerce or intercourse. These aborigines belong principally to three American tribes, the Carib, Acaway, and Arawak. They and the Djukas mutually look down on each other, but in our opinion the latter are intellectually the superior. Indian and Djuka villages are separate; very little trading occurs between them. On the Marowyne, Tapanahoni, and Lawa Rivers, however, the Negroes occupy a strategic position on the middle rivers, so that Indians from their remote villages along the upper river must pass by Bush Negro towns on their way downstream to trade at the white settlement of Albina, near the mouth of the Marowyne. The Djukas tell the Indians that the white men in Albina practise cannibalism. Rather than run the risk of trading with cannibals, the Indians barter their stuff in the Bush Negro towns. By this crafty arrangement, the Negroes obtain bead and feather work in exchange for tobacco and for machetes.

The Indians on the other rivers do not share this superstition concerning the white man's cannibalism. None of the Indian tribes mingle with the Djukas other than for the pur-

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613 554 [183] It is enough to consult the genealogical tables, on each of which we have indicated the transmission of the office of captain, to be convinced that nothing of the kind is practiced: besides, it would be impossible in fact. The council chooses from among [643] /66/ the "brothers" and the "nephews" of the deceased. If the nomination is obtained, it is valid only if the grand man does not oppose his veto. He can require that the council be begun again.

613 554 643 The grand man observes the behavior of the new head for about a year, and if he is satisfied with him, he calls him to Boniville together with the members of the lineage. He turns over to him the bench and the baton of command (waka tiki) prepared by the doyen of the lineage. He takes him by the hand and has him sit down on the bench while proclaiming him head.

613 554 This appointment is made for life; once named, a captain cannot be dismissed.

The succession of the last three captains of the Dju lo is particularly interesting (see the genealogical table of this group).

In 1948, the first time we passed through, Diolè (El) had been captain for nearly 50 years, succeeding Doomé, whose position we have not been able to place exactly in the genealogical table.

Diolè died in 1951 at about 90 years of age. At the time of the mourning his yɔrka was questioned, and it designated (through the medium of the coffin bearers) as a desirable successor one of his nephews in the classificatory sense, named Loko (F39).

643 685 The council which met upon the close of the mourning for Diolè, in 1952, approved the designation of Loko; but the grand man opposed this appointment because Loko had been guilty of a serious crime (aggravated theft) and had incurred a sentence.

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643 778 241 The grand man acts as land head for the whole of the tribe. It is he who has the care of the sanctuary of mama gɔ̃ and who prays each year in the presence of a large gathering of people for the fertility of the soil.

643 793 776 782 The grand man is the priest of Odun, divinity whom the Boni regard as avenger of offenses against moral and religious law; by virtue of this, he alone is qualified to administer the oath against wiji (sorcery) and to implore the mercy of Odun toward those who have gone against his laws by fighting with arms.

643 156 In his religious functions this usually weak and unobtrusive man acts with sovereign authority and assurance, and we have several times seen people tremble before him.

643 681 [623] If someone has seriously transgressed the customary laws, or if he has stolen, committed adultery, given blows, poured forth serious insults or curses, the grand man inflicts on him punishment proportional to the gravity of the offense, such as making planks, /73/ a boat, pounding rice (if it is a woman). The product of the punishment is acquired by the grand man, as are the fines in money which he imposes in less serious cases.

643 685 For example in October, 1952, two adolescents of Boniville, Awétipay and Adyuka, were surprised while they were trying to break into an inhabited house; the grand man sentenced them forthwith to three days of forced labor, in the course of which he made them clean the approaches to the village and collect for his benefit wood for heating.

643 689 462 He can also punish disobedient or disrespectful young men by making them do work reserved for women, such as weeding the approaches to the village and the removal of dog droppings.

643 681 The grand man can confine a man to Boni villages by forbidding him to go beyond l'Enfant Perdu to the north and Kormotibo to the south; that is called sitafu sama (sitafu = captive). The man concerned, deprived of means of earning his living, thus becomes dependent on his family until he makes honorable amends.

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692 693 [641] An essential principle of the social life of the Refugee Blacks is that every citizen carries the law within himself. If several men are requested to arbitrate a private quarrel, it is said that they form a lïnti kuutu. But they can hand down only a sentence of conciliation. Only the general assembly convoked by the grand man has the power to impose its decision.

692 795 The ordinary role of the lïnti kuutu is to judge the dead, to make sure that they were not wisimï (sorcerers), to proceed to their interrogation in order to give the force of law to the answers, especially in what concerns inheritance.

692 693 775 The lïnti kuutu meets when a death is announced; the first to arrive go to the grand man who designates two of the captains to preside over the council this time (for all the members are equal). In fact, rare are the councils attended by all the men present in the villages. Most of the time the lïnti kuutu groups only about 30 men, mostly old men.

692 The lïnti kuutu meets very rarely to judge a living man. That has happened only three times between 1948 and 1957.

692 687 In 1948 the grand man convoked the lïnti kuutu to judge a man who, duly called as boatman to take him to Saint-Laurent, had not come. He was sentenced to make a pallisade around the grand man's habitation, which took more than a month of work. /15/

692 685 In 1953 the council met to judge Loko (Dju), who had made himself guilty of aggravated theft (simulated shipwreck to the detriment of a Benzdorp trader and resale of the merchandise), for which he had been condemned by French justice to several months in prison. Loko had to make honorable amends in the presence of the assembled members of his lineage, then he was sentenced to make 50 planks for the benefit of the grand man.

[224] [643] In August, 1957, the council met to judge Pototo (Asisi-Dju), 23 years old, and Amusupé (Asisi-Aw.B.), 70 years old, who were guilty of a grave offense: misappropriation of a tapir (malpouri) killed by a Djuka who, feeling gratitude toward the grand man, had made known his intention to offer him part of the meat.

692 /15 cont./
685 The Djuka had killed the tapir which had sunk. Pressed for
[224] time, he had had to leave, requesting the Asisi people to look for it.

The next day Pototo and Amusupé found the animal floating
[251] between two waters. They hid it in the bush and had it smoke-
[262] dried on their own behalf. They ate it with their wives (about 100 kilos of meat).

That ended up by becoming known, and a jealous man denounced them to the grand man.

Called before the Hinti kuutu, they had to apologize and were each sentenced to pay as a fine to the grand man a demijohn of 15 liters of tafia (worth about 6,000 francs) within four months.

[1735] Both of them were at a loss to pay this fine, belonging to the category of ne'er-do-wells who have no regular activity and live from day to day, selling some fish or game from time to time.

[613] Amusupé appealed to Captain Konduku, head of his lineage, who agreed to pay for the tafia for him, Amusupé reimbursing him little by little.

[613] As for Pototo, the head of his lineage refused categorically
[689] to help him because he had eaten the malpouri alone without allowing his family to share it (the village people would have found it normal to profit by the crime, but they deemed it immoral that
[123] one of their relatives had deprived them of meat). After three and a half months, Pototo began to occupy himself seriously at a paid job which he had the luck to find because we needed a bossman for two weeks.

577 The Boni did nothing but laugh while telling us this story.
626 Affairs of this kind, which do not involve any suprahuman inter-
[522] vention, escape in large measure their social morality; they have a certain feeling for what should be done, but submit to it only in proportion as they fear a material and immediate sanction.